

REMARKS

This reply timely responds to the Office Action mailed on July 19, 2003. Claims 1-8 are currently pending in the application, of which claims 1, 7 and 8 are independent claims. The Office Action indicates that claims 7 and 8 are allowed and claims 2-6 would be allowable if presented in independent form.

In view of the following Remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and timely withdrawal of the pending rejection for the reasons discussed below.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U. S. Patent No. 6,573,965 B1 issued to Liu, *et al.* ("Liu"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for at least the following reasons.

Claim 1 recites "spacers provided between the first substrate and the second substrate for maintaining a predetermined gap between the first substrate and the second substrate". An example of this claimed feature is shown in FIG. 1 of the present application, in which spacers 100 are provided between the first substrate 10 and the second substrate 20.

In this regard, the Examiner asserted "Liu has bump-like structures acting as spacers on the substrates (for example, #s 309-312)" (Office Action, page 3). This assertion is respectfully disagreed with.

In Liu, the bumps 309, 310, 311, 312, 407, 408 and 409 in FIGs. 3-5 are formed above the slits in order to achieve "a combination effect of a fringe field and a bump structure. Based on the effect, multi-domain units are formed to provide high pre-tilted angles for liquid crystal

molecules and result in an orderly alignment of the liquid crystal molecules” (Liu, column 4, lines 14-18).

However, Liu does not disclose or suggest that the bumps are used for “maintaining a predetermined gap between the first substrate and the second substrate”, as claimed. Quite contrarily, FIG. 5 of Liu clearly shows that the bumps on the upper substrate and the lower substrate are clearly *spaced apart from each other*, and there is *no structural means therebetween* provided for the purpose of “maintaining a predetermined gap between the first substrate and the second substrate”.

The Examiner has not provided how and where in Liu actually disclose that the bumps are used for this purposes. The Examiner has not provided any logical explanation as to why the Examiner has concluded that the bumps are intended for “maintaining a predetermined gap between the first substrate and the second substrate”. Thus, if the Examiner wish to maintain this position, the Examiner is respectfully request to clearly point out portions of Liu directed to the bumps being used for “maintaining a predetermined gap between the first substrate and the second substrate” in the next action.

It is submitted that Liu fails to disclose or even remotely suggest “spacers provided between the first substrate and the second substrate for maintaining a predetermined gap between the first substrate and the second substrate”. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §102(e) rejection of claim 1.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that a full and complete response has been made to the pending Office Action and respectfully submit that all of the stated grounds for rejection have been overcome or rendered moot. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-6 in addition to already allowed claims 7 and 8 are allowable and that the application is in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative at the number below to expedite prosecution.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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